

GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM

Friday, October 6, 2006

Hello, this is Governor Jennifer Granholm, recording a message to you this week from the road.

I was thrilled this week to have boxing legend Muhammad Ali and his wife Lonnie sign my online petition urging the Legislature to lift restrictions on embryonic stem cell research in Michigan.

Muhammad Ali has Parkinson's Disease, which is a brain disorder for which the cause and cure are unknown. He and Lonnie have been tireless advocates for stem cell research, testifying in front of Congress on the need for critical research to help address this disease.

Parkinson's Disease is just one of a multitude of diseases and conditions that could be better treated, possibly even prevented, as a result of stem cell research.

In my State of the State Address I called on state lawmakers to lift the restrictions on stem cell research for good reason.

Studying stem cells helps scientists better understand the the process that creates the specialized cells that make us what we are. Some of the most serious medical conditions, such as cancer or birth defects, occur during that process. Stem cell research could help scientists pinpoint what goes wrong and point the way to prevention and cures.

Another potential application of stem cell research is to generate new cells and tissues that could be used in medical therapies.

There are currently two bills in the Michigan Legislature that would lift the decades-old restrictions which were placed on embryonic stem cell research in our state before scientists really understood the amazing potential of this research. Those bills would also increase the penalties for anyone who violates our ban on human cloning.

Not only would stem cell research potentially save lives and prevent disease, it could also attract millions of dollars of investment in life sciences businesses and jobs to Michigan.

Stem cell research holds the power to improve the lives of thousands of Michiganians.

The men, women and children who suffer from conditions for which there is no treatment or cure deserve our help. So do the families and friends who care for them.

If you agree with me and the more than 70 percent of the American people, political leaders of both parties and many of this country's top scientists then join me by signing my online petition asking the Michigan legislature to open the doors to medical research by passing the bills to lift the restrictions. The petition is located at www.michigan.gov

Thank you for listening.